

Chirbury Rural Sanitary District.

Report for the Year 1908.

GENTLEMEN,

I have the honour to submit for your consideration my Third Annual Report on the health and sanitation of the district.

Births.—During the year 1908, 76 births have been registered this being a slight decrease on the previous year. This gives a birth rate of 21·46 per 1000. The average rate for past 5 years being 21·99.

Deaths.—Total deaths registered as actually occurring in the district was 50, giving a rate of 14·12. Five deaths of residents took place in institutions beyond the district, giving a total of 55 deaths of residents belonging to the district.

The average for the last 4 years (1) actually in the district was 12·38. (2) Total deaths of all belonging to the district was 14·9.

The rate it will be seen is slightly above the average.

Infantile Mortality.—I have again to congratulate the Council on this matter. Three infants only under one year of age died, giving a death rate of 39·6, which, compared with last year's rate, viz. 50 per 1000, and the average of 77·5 is very favourable indeed. Excluding one infant (attended by myself) and injured during an extremely difficult labour the rate becomes only 26·3. The infantile mortality for England and Wales as given in the Registrar General's provisional report for 1908 being 121.

The milk difficulty during the early months of the year I am afraid still continues and in a district of this kind it is difficult to suggest any workable scheme for altering matters and lately a large milk factory has been established just beyond the district which will I fear increase difficulties in this direction.

Zymotic Death Rate.—I am pleased to say this is again 'Nil.'

Infectious (notifiable) Diseases.—Again the district has been remarkably free from all these diseases. One sporadic case of scarlet fever occurred at Brockton. It was of a very mild type and no further cases ensued from it.

Phthisis.—This disease still continues rather prevalent. A movement however is on foot to consider the question of providing a Sanatorium or other accommodation in the County, and compulsory notification has been ordered in the case of persons in receipt of Parish Relief.

I would recommend the Council, if possible, to introduce compulsory notification in *all* cases as voluntary has been, in my opinion, a complete failure.

On further enquiry I find this is not in the power of the Council to do. Should legislation be introduced, giving the power, the Council should support it in every way.

General Sanitary Conditions.

Housing.—Good work has been done in this direction. Many houses, to my own personal knowledge, have been attended to on account of dampness and have been improved as far as any improvement is possible. As I pointed out last year, the construction of many such houses renders improvement very difficult, and in many cases impossible, nothing short of pulling down and re-building being of any avail. Such a course in a district of this kind being naturally impossible. No case of serious overcrowding has been brought to my notice.

Drainage, Sewage and Refuse Disposal.—These matters as I pointed out last year call for attention, in my opinion far more so than housing accommodation, in so far as the one evil seems to me far more easily remedied than the other. The emptying of closets, closing of open foul-smelling drains should be attended to.

I am not referring to any specific cases but speaking in general terms, and strongly urge the Council to see if some scheme could not be arrived at whereby the more satisfactory disposal of sewage could be carried out.

The pan closet system should be adopted generally as far as possible in place of the old pit one, being simple, cheap, and effective.

Workshops and Slaughter Houses.—Workshops very satisfactory. One slaughter house I should like to call attention to as it is an instance of imperfect drainage. It is situated in the lane leading up towards Brockton from Worthen, known I believe as Hampton Road. I have frequently seen blood and other offal running out over the road, and further, it is situated too close to an occupied house, the doors being only a few yards from the back door of the said house.

Dairies, and Cow Sheds.—Dairies are very well kept and ventilated. Lime washing in case of cow sheds could be carried out more frequently with advantage.

Water Supply.—This is at present receiving careful attention and calls for no further comments at present. I hope next year to be able to report that some definite plan has been arrived at.

General Remarks.—I think the Council may be congratulated on the past year's work.

The general health has been excellent.

The death rate is perhaps slightly above the average, but out of the 50 deaths no less than 33 were of people of 65 years of age and upwards. 12 of these were persons of 80 and upwards.

The death rate for England and Wales during 1908 was 14·7 so this district is about the average rate.

The freedom from infectious diseases and also the extremely low infantile mortality are most satisfactory.

Herewith I append the usual statistical tables to which I have referred in this report, and again recommend the Council to turn their attention to drainage, sewage and refuse disposal generally.

I have the honour to remain, Gentlemen,

Your obedient servant,

J. R. WOODS.

Worthen, February, 1909.

